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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 7418  
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION Q LEBANON CRISIS - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: Friday morning's Mainichi front-paged a report from Jerusalem concerning a meeting of Israeli cabinet ministers, at which they decided to continue military action against Hezbollah. A front-page Tokyo Shimbun story from Kuala Lumpur reported on a meeting of foreign ministers from eight countries Friday afternoon to discuss North Korea.

[11](#). "Lebanon Crisis: US-EU Discord Delays Ceasefire" The business-oriented Nihon Keizai editorialized (7/28): "The fighting between Israel and Hezbollah has left Lebanon facing a national crisis. Secretary of State Rice and the foreign ministers from European and Arab nations, joined by UN Secretary General Annan, held an emergency meeting in a bid to resolve the crisis. However, no accord was reached, as the UN and European and Arab nations demanded an immediate ceasefire, while the US expressed understanding for Israeli military operations and called for the disarmament of Hezbollah and the establishment of a sustainable ceasefire.... Lebanon is facing mounting civilian casualties, and more than 800,000 of its citizens have been forced to flee either to other parts of the country or abroad. This humanitarian problem cannot be overlooked....

[12](#). "Israel is rightly being condemned for its attack on a UN facility, and there are increasing questions about the US tendency to tilt too far toward Israel.... Although the European countries are calling for an immediate ceasefire and the dispatch of an international force, the truth is that they do not want to accept the risk of directly facing off with Hezbollah and are hoping that the dispatch of an international force will take place only after significant progress in Israeli military operations.... Should antipathy toward the US and Israel

intensify as more blood is spilled, this would impact the future of the Middle East peace process, the stabilizing of Lebanon, and Iran's nuclear development. The US will need to make a political decision from a broader perspective."

¶3. "Attack on Lebanon: Move Now for Ceasefire" An editorial in the liberal Asahi commented (7/28): "...Israel should immediately suspend its military assault on Lebanon. The US, its main backer, should move toward an immediate ceasefire and hasten talks with concerned nations. An attempt to mediate the situation by the international community failed, as participants at an international conference in Rome agreed on the need to send an international force to southern Lebanon but could not agree on the details...."

¶4. "A prolonged conflict would not be in the interest of either Israel or the US. Along with Hezbollah, Israel should quickly agree to a ceasefire and allow an international force in the area to monitor it. How to disarm Hezbollah is a difficult question. At a minimum, though, it is necessary to try to persuade Syria and Iran to exercise their influence on the group. We want Secretary of State Rice to visit Syria and negotiate."

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Japan should work together with European countries to make this a reality.... Both Israel and the US bear a heavy responsibility to put an end to the crisis in Lebanon."

SCHIEFFER